



40 WAYS TO

PLAY
BETTER SOCCERNo. 5 CONTROLLING BALL
WITH CHEST

Mike Channon receives a ball just outside his opponents' penalty area, his back to the goal he's attacking. It's been played up to him by Francis who has spotted that Channon has moved just half a dozen yards away from the marking defender. Any moment this defender will move in to challenge Channon.

The ball has reached Channon in the air. None of his team mates are close at hand and unmarked to receive a headed pass. He therefore gets behind the path of the ball and pushes his chest out at it. As the ball touches his Mike Channon relaxes his chest to absorb the ball's momentum, and it drops "dead" at his feet, safely out of reach - for the moment - of the defender who's come up behind.

See also Picture Cards 3 and 4 for other ways to bring the ball under control.

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40 WAYS TO

PLAY
BETTER SOCCERNo. 4 CONTROLLING BALL
WITH THIGH

Gerry Francis demonstrates a typical modern ball-control skill; bringing the ball down out of the air with the thigh, to control it quickly. Francis drops the ball at his feet by raising his thigh to meet the falling ball, then relaxing and dropping his thigh at the moment of impact, to kill the momentum of the ball.

Here the ball has been played out to him wide on the far touchline by Todd, who has decided that mounting an attack down his side of the field doesn't look very promising.

Francis has already looked round to see where team mates and opponents are, and the task of controlling the ball now has his undivided attention. As the ball arrives Francis makes delicate adjustments in the position of his feet and body so that he's perfectly balanced as he brings the ball down.

See also Picture Cards 3 and 5 for other ways of bringing the ball under control.

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No. 3 TRAPPING WITH FOOT

Here Colin Todd has moved into an open space on the touchline to receive a lobbed pass from his goalkeeper. His aim is to bring the ball under control, on the ground, quickly and safely so as to give himself maximum time to decide how to use the ball before he's challenged by an opponent.

Notice how his eyes and head have dropped to follow the ball as it drops to the ground - a moment earlier the ball was ballooning through the air towards him. Notice how the outside of his foot has made contact with the ball just as it touches the ground. Todd's leg sweeps the ball all in one movement a couple of yards upfield so that as his head comes up to check again on the positions of other players the ball is just right for a long or short pass - or perhaps even a run down the touchline.

See also Picture Cards 4 and 6 for other ways of bringing the ball under control.

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No. 2 GOALKEEPER'S THROW

Ray Clemence has kicked the ball upfield to his strikers when that's what the state of the game needs. Perhaps he's noticed though that lots of the high balls down the middle, say, are being won by tall defenders on the other side. And here he's spotted that one of his own defenders has run into a good open space on the touchline, back in his own half.

A quick accurate throw to this defender makes sure his side keeps possession of the ball.

Notice how the arm throwing the ball has gone round the body to follow through for maximum power and direction. The arm was extended as far as possible behind the body and the throw is an over-arm action. Alternatively, if the defender had taken a position nearer, Clemence might have rolled the ball under-arm along the ground.

See also Picture Cards 1, 15, 16, 17, 30, 31 and 41 for other goalkeeping skills demonstrated by Ray Clemence.

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No. 1 CONCENTRATION

"In the modern game", says Don Revie, "every player in the team has to keep thinking hard for the whole 90 minutes of the match. There's no time for day-dreaming!"

When a striker comes charging towards goalkeeper Ray Clemence's penalty area and Clemence arrives "out of the blue" and spreads himself at the attacker's feet to clear the ball from the edge of the box, it's no lucky accident! Ray Clemence will probably have spotted the break coming two passes earlier!

Throughout the game Clemence watches intently the build-up of his own team's movements. All the time he's observing how the play is developing, who's moving off the ball as well as on it, what gaps may be opening up in his own defensive cover, what precise position he's going to take up if the opponents gain possession of the ball and break away fast.

See also Picture Cards 2, 13, 18, 19, 30, 31 and 40 for other goalkeeping skills.

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No. 10 MAKING SPACE

Making space is really making things happen without the ball. Channon will often make a 30 yard run taking one or even two defenders with him. The spaces left behind by this movement can then be exploited by his team mates.

He is always looking for positions when he is not in possession which will give him the maximum amount of time should he receive the ball. Running must be constructive, forcing the defenders to change position to open up packed defences.

Channon will wander far out of his normal position, out behind full backs to avoid tight marking, sometimes switching from one side of the field to the other in search of that vital space.

Here Channon runs into space to receive a long ball out of defence from Todd. Francis watches.

See also Picture Cards 6, 11, 12, 14, 15, 26, 27, 28, 33, 36 and 39 to improve your attacking play.

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BETTER SOCCER

No. 9 WEIGHTED PASS

"It's not just the accurate direction of a pass that counts," says Don Revie, "it's the weight you put on the pass as well."

Passing is probably the most important single skill in the whole game. Without good passing the team will not keep possession and cannot dictate the pattern of the game.

Here Todd has won possession of the ball in defence and has spotted Channon running into space just inside the opponents' half. Todd strikes the ball with just the right weight and power so that it arrives beautifully in the path of Channon who can gather it and move on without a check in pace.

See also Picture Cards 20, 21, 22, 27 and 37 for other ways of improving your passing.

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No. 8 TACKLING

Colin Todd has picked his moment exactly to launch his tackle on the attacking striker. He has judged that he has good defensive cover behind him or the attacker is off balance in his movement. Todd who has been stalking the other player suddenly changes pace moving in very quickly. Knowing when to tackle is as important as knowing how. Tackling is not just taking the ball from the opponent, you also want to retain possession of it. Todd avoids the sliding tackle unless there is no choice in a desperate situation. Using his weight to the utmost advantage Todd strikes for the ball hard, determined to make the ball his. Notice the crouched, balanced position.

See also Picture Cards 3, 7, 9 and 34 for other defensive skills demonstrated by Colin Todd.

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40 WAYS TO

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BETTER SOCCERNo. 7 RETREATING IN
DEFENCE

The opponents are launching another attack. One of their front runners is advancing fast, the ball at his feet.

Colin Todd of England retreats towards his own penalty box, checking quickly to see that his fellow defenders are covering other routes to goal, and all the time edging the attacker out towards the touchline - not many goals are scored from there! If he's not happy with the cover behind him, Todd will try to slow the attacking player down, possibly to a halt, to give the other defending players time to race back behind him. He certainly won't commit himself to a reckless tackle until he has sufficient cover from fellow defenders.

Once other defenders are covering him behind, Todd's aim is to move in close reducing the number of attacking possibilities and restricting the attacker's choice of movement or pass. See also Picture Cards 3, 8, 9 and 34 to play better defensive soccer yourself.

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BETTER SOCCER

No. 6 TURNING

Mike Channon, one of England's most effective "strikers", has received a pass close to the edge of the opponents' penalty area, his back towards the goal he's attacking. His path to goal is blocked by an opposing defender.

Most players in this situation tend to play the ball the way they are facing, but, a player of Channon's ability will first drop a shoulder and feint to one side making the defender move to cover. Channon then turns tightly with the ball to the other side, having created that vital minimum of space for the turn. Turning in tight situations despite fierce tackling and tight marking demands courage as well as skill.

Certainly a player who has the ability to turn can create chances out of nothing and give his team scoring opportunities.

See also Picture Cards 5, 11, 12, 14, 15, 26, 27, 32 and 35 to improve your play as a striker.

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40 WAYS TO PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 15 FAR-POST CORNER

With the far-post corner the ball is struck to sail high across the face of the goal.

Channon has positioned himself on the far corner of the penalty area and has judged the flight of the ball perfectly so that he runs in and jumps to meet the ball with his head at the peak of his jump.

So much depends on the accuracy of the corner kick. Channon has had to commit himself to the run as the ball is struck and if the corner is a bad one and swings out too far, he has no chance to adjust as the ball passes behind him. Here the ball was an "in-swing". The goalkeeper has wrongly judged that the ball was going too far out into the penalty area for him to reach, and now that it's swung back in towards the goal he's left it too late to challenge Channon.

See also Picture Cards 14, 30 and 36 to improve your own heading for goal.

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No. 14 NEAR-POST CORNER

The near-post corner needs to be struck hard and fast and close in to goal. A signal from the corner taker has made Channon sprint a few quick yards to the near-post to glance the ball into the net as the ball comes across.

The goalkeeper is still stretched back near the far post, with no time to get across to challenge Channon in the air.

Sometimes an attacker will reach a corner kick like this before it reaches the goal, flicking it on backwards across goal with his head for a tall striker to rise above a defence and nod the ball home.

See also Picture Cards 15, 30 and 36 for other attacking headers.

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40 WAYS TO PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 13 NARROWING THE ANGLE

Clemence has superb positional sense, always changing his position in goal as the pattern of play changes, constantly adjusting to the angle of any possible shot. Very rarely will you see him caught out by a surprise shot.

Here he has positioned himself perfectly to meet an attacker cutting inside from the wing. Look at the picture and imagine you are about to shoot. Clemence has made the angle so narrow that the target has been reduced to the area marked 1. He is covering the other area marked 2, and you have little chance of sticking the ball past a goalkeeper of his ability.

Even facing the front of the goal he will be several yards off the goal line narrowing down the target area.

See also Picture Cards 1, 2, 16, 17, 30, 31 and 40 for further ways to improve your goal-keeping.

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No. 12 CUTTING INSIDE

Don Revie, England team manager says, "Channon is exceptional at going at defenders fast."

His remarkable control at speed gives him the ability to take on a defender on either side. Having got into the situation of a one-to-one, he can then decide to take the ball outside and down to the by-line for a cross or cut inside towards goal. Exactly what he decides will be determined by the positions of other team mates.

Here Channon has totally wrong-footed the defender by slowing slightly, then accelerating again immediately, this time inside the defender. The path to goal lies open.

See also Picture Cards 1, 6, 11, 14, 15, 30, 27, 33 and 35 for other attacking skills.

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40 WAYS TO PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 11 RUNNING WITH BALL

When Mike Channon makes a run for goal he leaves his feet to look after the ball. When in possession Channon has learned to look and assess the situation around him while moving at top speed - to take a bird's eye view of the whole field of play.

Here he's received a quick ball out of defence from Colin Todd, and Channon is looking to see how many defenders he needs to take on if he makes for goal himself, or whether there's a team mate running free and with a clearer route for goal, or whether he should make for the by-line and cut the ball back to whoever's arrived in the penalty box, by then.

All this while running at a speed that will stretch the legs of even the fastest defenders!

See also Picture Cards 12 and 25 for other movement with the ball skills.

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No. 20 THE SHORT PASS

In this picture Gerry Francis of England demonstrates just one of the many ways of making a short pass - this time a quick stab with the instep, the toe pointed down.

Perhaps the most common way is to push the ball with the inside of the foot. This can ensure great accuracy.

You will sometimes see Francis play a short pass with a flick of the outside of the foot, but this needs very good timing if the pass is to go just as far as Francis needs to get the ball to the feet of his team mate.

The short passes are a safe and sure way of building an attack. The shorter the distance a ball has to travel the less chance there is of interception.

Francis is always looking for the pass which not only maintains possession but also takes a defender out of the game, giving his team mate who receives the ball unchallenged progress forward.

See also Picture Cards 9, 21, 22, 27 and 37 for further passing skills.

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No. 19 INTERCEPTION

A typical picture of Gerry Francis demonstrates the key skill of the modern midfield player - winning possession of the ball.

Here Francis has watched a ball being worked patiently out of the other team's defence, and reading the play and guessing his opponents' next move, has moved quickly to intercept a pass as their attack moves into his own half of the field.

Notice the strength and power of Francis's thighs - it's this that gives him speed off the mark as he moves quickly to the pass he has chosen to intercept. "Strength and determination makes Francis exceptional at winning fifty-fifty balls," says Don Revie - balls which in theory his opponent had an equal chance of winning.

Francis doesn't mark his opponents too early in midfield; too close marking makes the other team pass elsewhere, away from Francis.

See also Picture Cards 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 36 for other midfield skills.

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No. 18 THE LONG SHOT

Here we see Gerry Francis firing in a long shot at goal. Power is essential. Francis gets all his weight behind the shot with the foot following through. To keep the ball low the knee of the striking leg is over the ball at the moment of impact.

Francis will often come up from midfield to pick up a loose ball badly cleared out of the opponents' goal mouth. Headed clearances from corners are often made under pressure and do not have the distance they should. This is the sort of ball Francis will pounce on, perhaps even striking the ball first time, on the volley, as it drops. At other times Francis will burst through from midfield and put in a long shot at goal on the run.

If the goalkeeper has advanced too far forward Francis may even attempt to lob the ball over his head.

See also Picture Cards 26, 28 and 39 to improve your own shooting at goal.

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No. 17 GOALKEEPER'S PUNCH

Ray Clemence of England will attempt to catch the ball whenever possible, but if he's under great pressure from attacking players, he will sometimes punch a high ball away, using both fists if he can.

In the illustration a high corner has sailed across just outside the goal area. Clemence is hemmed in by both attacking players and defenders. Once he has decided to go for the ball and has left his goal line Clemence is totally determined to reach the ball before anyone else. Here you see him having to use just one fist to achieve maximum reach and gain those vital extra inches to clear his goal.

On other occasions the high ball will be threatening the goal direct, and at these times, as Don Revie, England's manager says, "Clemence is exceptional at going back five paces and flicking over the bar the fluster or drifter."

See also Picture Cards 1, 2, 13, 16, 30, 31 and 40 to improve your own play in goal.

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No. 16 THE HIGH CATCH

Clemence has "good" hands for catching. It often looks as though he has glue on his palms to make the ball stick! He's the master of catching the high ball.

Judging the flight of the ball with absolute concentration, ignoring any pressure from the opposing strikers he rises to grasp the ball. Forming a perfect cradle with his hands, with the thumbs at the back of the ball, he pulls the ball down into his body as he drops to the ground.

As he lands he will already be computing in his mind the opportunities for a swift counter attack. Defenders will be running wide into space to receive the ball. As Clemence has a tremendous volley he may send the ball straight to the other end sitting at his "target" - a striker waiting for just that type of clearance.

See Picture Cards 1, 2, 13, 17, 30, 31 and 40 for more skills demonstrated by Ray Clemence.

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40 WAYS TO

PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 25 CHANGING PACE

A good midfield player like Gerry Francis controls the speed of the game to suit his own team. If they are under pressure and rushed off their feet he attempts to slow the pace down to give them time to recover their breath and their confidence. If there's a sudden gap upfield in the opponents' defence he may swing a hard, sudden pass into the space to allow one of his attackers to rush on to the ball and shoot first time at goal.

Here Francis has been bringing the ball forward into the opponents' half of the field at little more than walking pace. Seeing the opposing defence has been lulled into a false sense of safety Francis suddenly "explosives" into a dash towards goal, bursting past the defender in front of him who's left still rooted in the ground. Immediately the defence is thrown into a panic, with nobody quite sure whether to come across to tackle Francis in case he intends a shot at goal or whether to go on marking Francis's team mates.

See also Picture Cards 18, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24 to improve your midfield play.

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No. 24 THE SHORT THROW

The short throw often requires the thrower's team mates to keep changing position until space is made for a throw which ensures the team keeps possession of the ball.

If the player about to receive the ball is closely marked from behind by an opponent a good move is often to feint to run upfield and then - as the marking opponent begins to go with him - to stop dead so that there's a brief moment unmarked. The thrower throws the ball quickly, knee high, to the receiver; the receiver volleys it straight back to the thrower with the inside of his foot; the thrower cranks up with the ball back at his feet and space in which to consider what next to do.

Notice how Gerry Francis has his hands at the back of the ball, giving him control and power. His feet are firmly planted on the right side of the line, and of course to make the throw legal the ball will go over his head before being thrown.

See also Picture Card 32 to get another throwing tip, this time from Colin Todd.

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40 WAYS TO

PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 23 SHIELDING THE BALL

"One of Gerry Francis's best qualities," says Don Revie, England's team manager, "is that he'd sooner get caught in possession than play a team mate into trouble."

Keeping the ball is vital. Only the team with the ball can build attacks and score goals. A selfish player will run into trouble and rather than appear to lose it will give a bad pass to a team mate. The team mate loses the ball immediately, and, wrongly, takes some of the blame.

Here Francis shields or "screens" the ball from an opponent by taking up a sideways position, keeping the ball furthest away so that the other player can reach it only by fouling Francis.

Francis holds this position only for a second or two, but that's long enough for one of his own team to run into a position where Francis's pass can reach him safely.

See also Picture Cards 19, 20, 21, 22, 24 and 25 for other midfield skills.

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40 WAYS TO

PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 22 BENDING THE BALL

When Gerry Francis sees that an advance down one side of the field is blocked by his opponents he very often switches the ball across the midfield, across the face of his opponents' defence, to the other wing.

Here he's "bending the ball" - kicking the ball with a glancing blow from one side of his foot to make the ball swerve in flight and drop into the path of his team mate who's running fast down the opposite wing.

Swift changes in the point and direction of an attack unsettles the opposing defence. The defence shift their attention to the new threat - perhaps loosening their marking on Francis's strikers for a brief but vital moment.

See also Picture Cards 19, 20, 21, 23, 24 and 25 for other midfield skills.

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40 WAYS TO

PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 21 THE LONG PASS

Gerry Francis hits a long pass out of his own half, speeding the ball upfield to his strikers.

The midfield player needs to be able to keep a constant check on where everybody is on the field, so that as he gains possession of the ball he can make his choice of the best pass available.

Here the ball has been hit hard and true with a long follow-through of the leg. It's the type of pass that most likely will keep on moving fast after bouncing, and Francis's strikers are going to have to break into a fast gallop to fasten on it before it goes over the by-line. Equally defenders are going to have to turn and chase back very fast if it passes over their heads.

See also Picture Cards 9, 20, 23, 27 and 27 for other ways to improve your passing.

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40 WAYS TO

PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 30 SAVING A HARD SHOT

A goalkeeper on the receiving end of, for example, the fierce volley shown on Picture Card 28 has got his work cut out to stop it hitting the back of the net!

England's Ray Clemence has cat-like reflexes. This enables him to move so quickly that more often than not he can get his body behind the shot. This is a basic rule for good goalkeeping, since if the ball slips through the hands the body acts as a second barrier.

Clemence crouches to form a hollow between his chest and arms to cradle the speeding ball. On contact the hands fold up behind the ball closing the perfect trap.

If the shot is particularly fierce then he may beat it down to take the power out of it but only if there are no lurking forwards ready to knock in any uncontrolled rebound.

One hundred per cent concentration is required of a goalkeeper throughout the whole ninety minutes of a match: you can read more about how Ray Clemence concentrates on Picture Card 1.

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PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 29 THE DEFENSIVE WALL

The object of this wall is to deny the opposition a direct shot at goal from a free kick and the idea is that the wall covers one part of the goal and the goalkeeper the remainder.

In the illustration you see that Gerry Francis has taken up a position in the wall. This confuses the defenders. He may move suddenly and create a gap for Mike Channon to strike the ball through.

In fact Channon kicks the ball diagonally across the goal for another player running in to have a clear shot at goal, debating the object of the wall with just one short pass.

Picture Cards 14 and 15 show Mike Channon deceiving defences in corner kicks.

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PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 28 THE VOLLEY

There is nothing quite so exciting as watching a player hitting a first time ball on the volley, and as Don Revie says, "Francis is a superb volliager of the ball."

He moves his feet quickly to get behind the ball then strikes smoothly through the flight of the dropping ball, all the while perfectly balanced. The result is power and accuracy.

Here the ball has been shipped over defenders' heads by Mike Channon, taking an England free kick just outside the opponents' penalty box. Before he can be challenged Francis meets the ball on the volley and cracks it at goal.

In Picture Card 16 Gerry Francis shows how you can improve your long shots at goal.

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PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 27 THE CHIP PASS

If you can't get round a player you can sometimes get the ball over his head - even when you start with the ball dead on the ground.

Here Mike Channon of England takes a free kick just outside the other team's penalty area and "chips" the ball over the defenders' heads towards Gerry Francis who has moved into position quickly to receive the pass.

Channon makes the ball balloon into the area by getting his toe under the ball and stopping his foot dead as it strikes the ball sharply.

Gerry Francis and Mike Channon work together close in to the other side's goal in Picture Card 37 as well.

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40 WAYS TO

PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 26 BANANA SHOT

England have been awarded a direct free kick outside the opponents' penalty area.

A defensive wall is formed quickly to block one side of the goal while the goalkeeper guards the other side.

Mike Channon of England comes up to take the kick and decides to go for a "banana" shot, curving the ball round the end of the defensive wall and into the top right angle of the goal.

He does this by striking the ball with the inside of his right foot as shown in the diagram in your album.

Some of the players that England come up against nowadays are so good at these swerving free kicks that Don Revie gets the England defensive wall to cover eighteen inches or so outside the goalpost as well as the goal itself, to cut off even this sort of sharp swerve.

Another use of the swerving or "bending" ball is demonstrated by Gerry Francis on Picture Card 22.

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No. 35 DUMMYING

A ball comes across fast and low from the wing. The penalty box is packed tight with defenders determined to keep out England's attacks.

Mike Channon darts in to meet the ball as it arrives in front of goal. The big No. 8 defender sees Channon about to take the ball in his stride and begins to move to his right to cut off Channon's route to goal.

But Channon is feinting: instead of pushing the ball forward he instead steps over it, letting the pass from the wing go straight through to an England team mate who shoots immediately during the split second during which the defenders isolating the goalkeeper are still poised to meet the threat from Channon.

Mike Channon demonstrates other attacking skills throughout this series of Picture Cards.

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No. 34 DEFENSIVE HEADER

Colin Todd of England shows how to clear high balls floating across into your own team's penalty area.

By standing just a few yards off the attacker he is marking, Todd has given himself the room to run three or four paces before jumping for the ball, giving him an extra thrust off the ground for extra height.

His aim is to reach the ball before the opposing attackers, and to get plenty of distance to his head clearance by hitting the underside of the ball with his forehead.

If under strong pressure from the other team's strikers Todd may head for the touchline for safety.

If he has more time he may attempt to direct his header to one of his team further afield.

Whatever else he does Todd certainly wants to avoid heading the ball to an opponent on the edge of his own penalty area.

Picture Card 18 - the Long Shot - shows what an expensive gift that can be!

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No. 33 HEAD FOR GOAL

The ball floats into the penalty area from an attacking long throw from Colin Todd of England.

Mike Channon times his jump perfectly to climb high to the ball, stretching his neck to get above the ball if he possibly can. There's so great speed on the ball as Channon has to thump the ball hard with his forehead if it's to travel fast enough to beat the goalkeeper. The power comes from a "jack-knife" movement of the body as Channon thrusts the top half of his body forward from the hips at the peak of his jump, keeping his neck muscles taut and really hitting the ball hard.

The flight of a ball directed downwards is especially hard for a goalkeeper to judge correctly, and this is why Mike Channon is stretching so hard to get higher than the ball. Getting up high also makes sure the ball doesn't balloon off his head and over the top of the goal.

Other types of header at goal are demonstrated on Picture Cards 14, 15 and 16.

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No. 32 THE LONG THROW

Colin Todd of England comes upfield to take a long throw-in that reaches into the other side's penalty area.

If the throw is near the corner it is as good as a corner kick with the ball reaching the near post.

The throw starts from way behind the touchline. Todd moves swiftly forward stopping short of the line and releasing the ball with a strong "whip-like" action, the arms following through. The knees are bent and added power comes from the forward thrust of the trunk from the hips. Both feet must be on the ground when the ball is released.

Don Revie points out that this is a skill that you can improve only by constant practice.

Gerry Francis demonstrates a short throw on Picture Card 24.

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No. 31 GOALKEEPER CONTROL

Don Revie praises Ray Clemence, England goalkeeper, as "the governor of the penalty box". Clemence dominates the area round his goal. His team mates leave well alone when he shouts a ball is "his".

When a free kick is taken against England just outside the England penalty area it's Clemence who organises the precise positioning of the defensive wall, using one of the England strikers who has dropped back to help him by marking the position of the dead ball.

In this picture Clemence has darted off his goal line to gather a ball bouncing around dangerously in his penalty area after the breakdown of an opponents' set-piece attack from a free kick.

Picture Cards 16 and 17 demonstrate Ray Clemence dealing with high balls in his area with equal determination.

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No. 40 DIVING

Whenever possible Ray Clemence dives side-on towards the ground which allows him to get his body behind the ball. If the ball arrives close to his body he does his utmost to catch the ball and pull it into his body. Diving sideways on like this also allows him to see the ball all the way.

Often it has to be a quick reaction dive where there is no chance of catching the ball. Then he tips the ball away safely round the post.

Diving at an opponent's feet needs courage, confidence and great skill. Coming out of goal Clemence "reads" the attacker's feet, waiting for the forward to push the ball just that fraction too far. Then he dives in to smother the ball.

In other Picture Cards in this series Ray Clemence demonstrates goalkeeping skills such as catching high balls, punching balls clear, concentration, controlling the penalty area and narrowing the angle for raiding wingers.

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No. 39 PENALTY KICK

Channon takes the penalties for England - a big responsibility!

He knows exactly where he is going to place the kick before he steps up to hit the ball. He has a deceptive run often sending the goalkeeper the wrong way.

Keeping the knee of the kicking leg well over the ball to keep the kick low, the ball is struck firmly low and hard to the corner of the goal.

Many goalkeepers commit themselves to diving to one side. This at least gives them a fifty-fifty chance of going in the right direction and if the ball has been slightly mis-hit they may be able to get to the ball.

Don Revie, the England manager, says of Channon's penalties: "He is so positive, he puts it exactly where he wants it."

Other England players will be moving in quickly as soon as the ball has been struck for if the goalkeeper does parry the ball a quick follow-up may provide a chance to knock it back in.

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No. 38 THE BACKHEEL

In a tightly packed penalty area the players attacking don't always have time for luxuries like turning with the ball to face the goal.

Here Gerry Francis has moved up from midfield to help England convert strong pressure into a goal. The ball is stabbed to him quickly along the ground by a team mate - or perhaps it has just struck an opponent's leg and has run free to Francis.

One defender is upon him immediately and two others are about to crowd in on him. With no time to turn or in any other way improve his shooting position, Francis simply backheels the ball towards goal - only half a dozen yards behind him.

It's an unexpected move, and the surprise may well earn him a goal.

Other ways of outwitting packed defences are shown on Picture Cards 35, 36 and 37.

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No. 37 THE ONE-TWO PASS

Mike Channon and Gerry Francis demonstrate the quick one-two pass as a way of penetrating a penalty box packed with close marking defenders.

Look at the illustration. Channon runs at goal and as the defender moves out to challenge, he pushes the ball to Francis. The defender hesitates. Francis pushes the ball straight back into the path of Channon who has kept running. The defender is out of the play without having had a chance to tackle.

This is sometimes called the wall pass. In this instance Francis was the wall. You push a ball against a wall and it bounces back. But Francis is much more than a wall. This ball didn't just rebound - it was perfectly weighted so that it arrived at Channon's feet without him having to check his stride.

Picture Cards 9, 20, 21, 22 and 27 will also help you improve your passing.

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40 WAYS TO PLAY BETTER SOCCER

No. 36 QUICK REACTIONS

When the ball comes to you in a tightly packed penalty box a few yards from your opponents' goal the only object is to handle it quickly into the back of the net!

Elegant methods are not necessarily the best, and many a good goal has been scored from short range off strikers' knees and shins and chests and even backs of heads!

In this picture Gerry Francis has rushed in headlong from the edge of the penalty area to meet a hard hit drive across the face of the other team's goal. The ball is too high to volley, too far ahead of Francis to bring down with the chest - almost out of Francis's reach altogether. He simply launches himself in a flying drive using all the forward momentum of his run and thumps it into the net off the flat of his forehead.

Mike Channon of England demonstrates other headers at goal on Picture Cards 14, 15 and 16.

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